



## **Energize and Mobilize!**

### ***Eat Fruits, Vegetables, and Be Active***

#### **Action Steps Parents Can Take at Their Kids School**

- ✓ **Find out if your child's school offers fruits and vegetables in the cafeteria, vending machine, school stores, as rewards, and at school parties.**
  - Encourage your child's school to offer healthy breakfast and lunch options, including fruits and vegetables.
  - Encourage your child to select the fruit or vegetable option during breakfast or lunch. Schools must offer these foods as part of a complete meal, so encourage your child to give them a try!
  - Learn what healthy options the cafeteria offers by asking your kids what is served. Encourage them to try something new every day.
  - Ask teachers or other school staff if there are healthy snack guidelines for classroom activities.
  - Make an appointment with the school principal or vice principal to talk about the school's health environment. Ask to be involved with the school's health committee if one exists.
  - Ask if campus vending machines or the student store offers fruits and vegetables.
- ✓ **Ask if fruit and vegetable taste testing and food demonstrations are offered in the classroom or cafeteria to encourage children to try a variety of produce.**
  - Make an appointment with the school district's food service director to talk about offering more fruit and vegetable choices. You'll find that many food service directors have the same goals for children that you do.
  - Encourage your district's child nutrition department to conduct classroom visits to discuss the importance of a healthy diet and daily physical activity. If this is not immediately workable, offer your services to coordinate the program! Invite local farmers, chefs, and retailers to partner with your child's school. Your school's director of food service will be a great resource in this area.
- ✓ **Find out if the principal, teachers, and other school staff know the importance of eating plenty of fruits and vegetables and engaging in physical activity every day. Encourage them to model healthy habits.**
  - Encourage your child's teacher to talk to kids about the health benefits of eating fruits and vegetables and engaging in physical activity every day.
  - Find out what treats are being provided for birthday and other parties at school. Suggest sweet fruits like grapes, strawberries, or nectarines as special treats.
  - Partner with nutrition professionals in your child's school district to provide resources (and if possible, training) to key school staff regarding the benefits of good nutrition and physical activity.
  - Work with the school and other parents to conduct healthy fundraising activities.

- ✓ **Learn more about healthy nutrition policies at your child's school.**
  - Find out if the school has imposed guidelines or restrictions on food and beverages sold on campus.
  - Become involved with the development of school wellness policies in your child's district.
  - Advocate for school boards to implement and enforce healthy food and beverage standards if they are not already in place. Attend school board meetings to support these measures.
  
- ✓ **Find out if your child's school and youth program incorporates physical activity during the school day and offers after-school physical activities.**
  - Ask about time spent for physical education during the school day. Districts are required to allow 200 minutes for physical education every 10 days in grades K-6.
  - Encourage school officials to allow adequate time for recess.
  - Investigate after-school programs that offer organized physical activities for children. There are alternatives to team sports like bike rides, dancing, swimming, or just running and playing outside.
  - If your school doesn't offer after-school sports, find out what team activities are offered through community organizations.